



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

231 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 757-2270 Fax (860) 757-2215

**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller
Children Committee Public Hearing
February 14, 2013**

S.B. 833, An Act Addressing the Medical and Educational Needs of Children

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony **on S.B. 833, *An Act Addressing the Medical and Educational Needs of Children***.

The Judicial Branch is concerned that the changes contemplated in lines 75-77 of this proposal could constitute an infringement on the rights of parents whose children have been temporarily removed from their custody by the Department of Children and Family. It would grant any person or agency that has been vested with the temporary care and custody of a child or youth the authority to make routine decisions regarding medical treatment, education, school counseling and emergency medical psychological, psychiatric or surgical treatment. This authority would allow the person or agency to make decisions that could have an important impact on the child's life, without parental consultation. Please keep in mind that, while the parents have temporarily lost custody of the child, their case has not yet been adjudicated and their parental rights are still intact. In many cases, the child will return to their care.

The Judicial Branch does not believe that the current status of the law, whereby the temporary custodian must attempt to consult with the child's parent regarding these decisions, should be changed. The authority contemplated by this bill is more appropriate to emergency situations, where a quick decision must be made and a parent cannot be reached.

Thank you for your consideration.